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[0027] As shown in FIGURE 3, all engineering tasks 43, QA tests, 45, and technical publications, 47, are linked back to their associated features. With this feature – centric system, critical decisions such as feature prioritization, resource allocation, and test planning are easily justifiable. Moreover, any Release Manager user can easily determine the development, testing, and documentation status for a given feature. When each of these areas is 100% complete for each feature, the product is ready to ship.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly cancel currently-pending claims 1-14 without prejudice or disclaimer, and add the following new claims.

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--15. A method for managing a release of a product, comprising:

describing the product in terms of a plurality of features;

entering a description of each of said features, wherein said description comprises an instantiation of a feature list graphical user interface;

defining a plurality of tasks, wherein each of said tasks is associated with one of said features, the plurality of tasks being grouped into task types;

entering a task progress development as an instantiation of a task-type graphical user interface, wherein the task-type graphical user interface is selected from a plurality of task-type graphical user interfaces, each corresponding to one of the task types; and

tracking a status of each feature via the instantiated task-type graphical user interfaces.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

linking all of the graphical user interfaces to one another via the features.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising:

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storing the feature descriptions, task definitions and task progress developments in a relational database; and

linking each task definition and related task progress developments to their corresponding feature through the use of relational database keys.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the task types include engineering tasks, quality assurance tasks and technical publication generation tasks.

19. A system for managing a release of a product, comprising:

a feature list graphical user interface operable to receive descriptions of features of the product; and

a plurality of task-type graphical user interfaces operable to be instantiated by an entry of progress developments of a plurality of tasks within each task type,

wherein each of the task-type graphical user interface instantiations are defined in terms of an associated feature.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein task-type graphical user interface instantiations related to a particular feature are linked to one another via that feature.

21. The system of claim 19, further comprising:

a relational database operable to store the descriptions of features and task-type graphical user interface instantiations.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein each feature description is associated with a primary key that allows that feature description to be associated with and linked to its corresponding task-type graphical user interface instantiations.

23. A system for managing a release of a product, comprising:

a product feature list user interface by which a user enters desired feature of the product to be released;

an engineer task list user interface by which the user enters and tracks information related to tasks being completed to implement the each of the product features entered in the feature list user interface;

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a quality assurance user interface by which the user manages and tracks both quality assurance test plans and tests that are executed against the test plans and designed to ensure the functionality of the desired product features;

a technical documents list user interface by which the user enters and tracks information related to documents being developed to describe the desired product features,

wherein all parameters entered by the user into the engineer task list user interface, the quality assurance user interface and the technical documents list user interface are each defined in terms of a particular one of the product features entered into the feature list user interface.

24. The system of claim 23, wherein all parameters entered by the user into the engineer task list user interface, the quality assurance user interface and the technical documents list user interface are each linked to a particular one of the product features entered into the feature list user interface.

25. The system of claim 23, further comprising:

a relational database operable to store data entered into the interfaces, and further operable to filter the data based on the product features.

26. A method for managing a release of a product, the method comprising:

describing the product in terms of desired features of the product;